

Parade 2/11/73



Q. During this past Christmas holiday when President Nixon ordered the massive bombings of Hanoi and Haiphong, we saw on TV almost every night a gentleman named Jerry Friedheim. He was described as the "Pentagon spokesman" and was

shown dodging the questions of Pentagon reporters. He reminded me of a mortician in Council Bluffs, Iowa. And that is my question: Was Jerry Friedheim, the Pentagon spokesman, ever a mortician in Council Bluffs, Iowa? He looks on TV as if rigor mortis has already set in.—Mrs. R.B.S., St. Louis, Mo.

A. Jerry W. Friedheim, 38, was never a mortician anywhere. He was born in Joplin, Mo., obtained his A.B. and M.A. degrees in journalism from the University of Missouri where he taught in 1961-62. Mr. Friedheim's unresponsiveness during the period you refer to was Mr. Friedheim under wraps. President Nixon ordered the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong without explanation to public, press or Congress. Under the circumstances Mr. Friedheim was not about to inform or explain what the Commander-in-Chief himself refused to do. Mr. Friedheim is considerably more responsive and friendly than he demonstrates on TV. He is married and the father of three children, two boys and a girl.